

**Town of Brentwood
Budget Committee**
Minutes of January 26, 2015

Present: Elyse Seeley (Chair), Bill Faria, John Lyon, Melissa Litchfield, (School Board Rep alternate for Dianne Vosgien), Malcolm Allison, Krista Steger, Jeff Bryan (Selectmen Rep), Barbara Zvodar.

Visitors: Ken Christiansen, Ron Kew (Swasey School Principal), Jessie Hollister, Michael Morgan, Kim Woods, Bob Mantegari, Amy Brown, Scott Dennehy, Tina Dennehy, Kathy Desmarais, Fred DiBaets, Brad Litchfield, Allison Yeagle, Katey Wilson, Amy Wilson, Paula Rushia, Kathy Carne, Wilhelmina Bradley, Kathie Babine, Crystal Buswell, Kristen Chiumento, Dan Hanlon, Keith Levitsky, Eric Turer, Liz McConnell, Rachael Heard, Ned Matson, Joshua Bertoulin, Bridget Zacher, Cathy Blasidell, Liz Faria, Allison Higgins, Nicole Sprague

Chairperson Elyse Seeley called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

1. Motion to approve draft minutes from January 19, Jeff/Barb, Approved, as amended and corrected 7-0-1.(Melissa)

New Business:

Town: Jeff presented for the BOS two warrant articles for the Fire Department for the purchase of a new fire-pumper truck and for CR replacement of other fire apparatus.

2. **CR – 4915-70-822:** Motion to add \$50,000.00 to the capital reserve for replacement fire apparatus, Jeff/Krista, approved 7-1.
3. **WA – 4900-70-834:** Motion to approve a four-year lease/purchase agreement, not to exceed \$336,000.00 for a lease/purchase of a new pumper truck. There would be an initial down payment of \$189,000.00 from the current capital reserve and annual payments of \$90,121.00 for four years. This will be brought to voters annually as a warrant article for \$90,121.00 to continue the lease/purchase (there's an escape clause). This vehicle will replace a pumper-rescue truck. Motion to approve, Jeff/Krista, failed, 5-3.

School:

4. Elyse provided copies of correspondence received from a citizen concerned about Bill Faria's potential conflict of interest and for the Board to consider disallowing his voting on school budget issues because his spouse is an elected member of the School Board. Elyse stated she contacted legal guidance for dealing with this through the town's membership at LGC, and they were very helpful. Also checked our town's new conflict of interest regs. There is nothing that disallows his voting or participation on school issues. Bill offered to recuse himself from any votes on the Swasey School budget issues. Elyse noted again that this was not required; "You don't need to". Bill affirmed that he wanted to do this if it absolves the Board from any question of integrity. He recused himself from voting but not from participating in discussions. Chair closed discussion. No votes taken.

5. Motion to open and discuss the proposed Brentwood Teacher's Association Contract, Krista/Melissa. Chair passed out information regarding costs of a teacher's retirement, based on an example provided by Amy Ransom. She noted the contract is an increase from the previous contract that was not approved at School District meeting last year. Total cost of salary increase is 330K vs. last year's 328K. The new contract is an increase in the annual longevity stipend from 1500 to 1600 and a cap of \$4,000.00 (\$5,000 grandfathered). This annual bonus for approx. 25 staff amounts to between \$1600 to \$5000 per year in addition to raises, and is now added to the base for retirement calculations.

Melissa believed there was an error about adding the bonus to the base and asked to consult with a member of the negotiating team. Apparently the wording: The longevity bonus shall not accumulate to the base has been omitted from the old contract and should be added. Elyse asked that the revision be emailed to the Budget Committee.

It was also noted that the contract was agreed to by the Brentwood School Board, and the Brentwood Teacher's Association and it is ultimately up to the town to make a final decision.

Motion to recommend the new teacher contract, Krista/Melissa, not approved, 5-2-1

6. Melissa asked if she could ask for reconsideration. No second. Melissa stated that she feels the Board is taking out issues with her, and she does not want those issues to impact decisions on the teachers and the school.
7. Motion to not recommend a citizen's petition WA requesting \$120,000.00 to fund a full day kindergarten program at Swasey School for the next school year. Jeff/Barb, to not recommend, 7-0-1. Note: This WA was not recommended by the School Board.

Old Business:

8. Motion to discuss the Swasey School Operating Budget, Krista/Malcolm, 7-0-1. Bill noted that he went over the budget, line by line, trying to find anything that could be reduced further and noted those areas, for a total of \$24,000.00, which would make the OB \$5,344,000.00 which is over a 2% reduction. Melissa passed out a copy of a capital improvement plan to give everyone an idea of what is being considered for future improvements at the school. Melissa also noted that the raw numbers of costs per pupil expenses, as discussed at the last meeting, although not including all expenses, still are the lowest costs per pupil in SAU 16. She provided the formula the state uses to make their cost-per-pupil calculations.

There was also discussion of changing or reducing costs in private industry versus municipalities/government costs, and a need for change in the expenses and how the costs are trending upward. Discussion of current class sizes and how costs could be saved by increasing those numbers. Motion to approve \$5,344,000.00, Jeff/Krista, not approved, 4-3-1.

Motion to approve, \$4,618,627.00, a reduction of \$750,000.00. Malcolm/John, not approved, 5-2-1

Motion to approve, \$5,325,000.00, Melissa/Jeff, a reduction of \$42,627.00, not approved, 4-3-1.

Motion to approve, \$4,718,627.00, Malcolm/John, a reduction of \$650,000.00, approved, 4-3-1.

Melissa asked to make a part of the record an email to Dianne asking that she consider an alternate other than Melissa as the school board representative at this meeting. Elyse asked her if the email she referenced was the one she herself addressed to Dianne regarding professionalism of her Board members, this following Melissa's partial, out-of-context remarks posted on Facebook re: BudCom after our most recent meeting. The context of emails should be clear.

Other Business:

9. Elyse asked Jeff if there were any other WA before the BOS. None. As all business is concluded, she will send out an email regarding status of the Feb 2 meeting.

8:25 pm, Motion to adjourn, Jeff/Krista, approved 8-0

Minutes respectfully submitted by William C. Faria